

Roche warns of double global crisis

by Elizabeth MacDonell

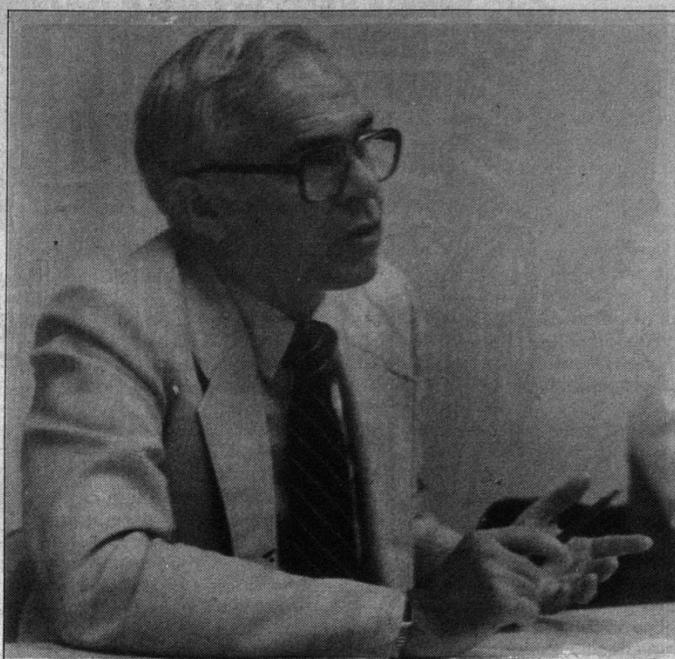
The world is facing a "double global crisis" Doug Roche, M.P. for Edmonton South said last Friday at a seminar hosted by the Issues in Developing Countries Club (IDC).

Roche cited the nuclear arms race and its threat to collective peace and security as the first global crisis. The second crisis involves the mounting international debt which may cause developed nations to curtail aid to third world countries, adding to tensions which already exist between developed and developing countries.

He said the "prime issue of the world today is nuclear arms" and added that he was "outraged" at Edmonton City Council's recent vote not to add a nuclear disarmament question to the ballot for the upcoming civic elections.

"I personally stand for a nuclear freeze," said Roche.

Commenting on the attitude of the world's population toward the nuclear arms race he said, "People are consumed by fear, frustration and a lack of confidence in the ability of governments to solve problems." He also said that current talks in Geneva are not solving the problem of the deployment of medium range missiles in western Europe.



Doug Roche explains the dangers of nuclear arms race

Roche is also the international president of Parliamentarians for World Order, an international network of legislators dedicated to world peace through world law. He was awarded the 1983 World

Peace Award by the World Federalists of Canada.

In his address on the occasion of his being presented with the Award, Roche said, "Not only militarism but deprivation, too,

threatens security" and recommended that "a world development fund (be instituted) through which a fixed proportion of the resources made available through disarmament will be devoted to development in the poorest nations."

Ray Verge, Executive Director of the Alberta Agency for International Development also spoke at the seminar and outlined Alberta's foreign aid program and its goals.

He said Alberta relies on non-governmental organizations to come to the provincial government with suggestions for foreign aid projects.

After the idea has been presented to the government a decision is reached as to whether money from the seven million dollar budget for foreign aid will be allocated to the project.

Verge said the Alberta government is cautious about the types of projects funded and also where because it would not like to get involved in "a potentially embarrassing situation for Canada" which is the reason Alberta is not funding projects in Nicaragua, Guatemala or El Salvador.

"We believe these countries must be allowed to sort out where they are going for themselves," he said adding that the federal

government is responsible for foreign relations.

From a federal government point of view, Roche said he believes it is wrong for Canada to cut back aid to developing countries whose governments we do not like and to thereby use aid to put political pressure on the governments of developing countries.

He called the popular movements in Nicaragua and El Salvador "a legitimate rise of the people who are demanding justice and the right to self-determination" and if developed countries refused to give aid to these countries and improve economic conditions there will "drive them to the Soviets."

Both men said they would like to see some of the money now being used for arms being used for development.

Roche said the nuclear arms issue and the issue of foreign aid are part of a "range of structural issues" which must be faced by the international community, but nuclear disarmament must be given priority.

"It will ill afford us to concentrate our energies exclusively on development at a time when the build up of nuclear arms and the arms race threatens the continuation of life on this planet."

CFS still optimistic despite problems

by Glen Sanford
Canadian University Press

OTTAWA — For someone who has spent the past four months perched on top of Canada's tottering student movement, Graham Dowdell seems remarkably relaxed.

Dowdell has taken the concerned-and-critical-but-mellow-and-optimistic approach to chairing the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) and his style allows him to remain calm while the federation sputters on the brink of political and financial insolvency.

The 26-year old University of Regina graduate easily won the federation's top executive position at the CFS general meeting in Saskatoon last May, when he ran against a little-known candidate from Ontario.

Dowdell took on the job at an especially bad time for CFS. Students across the country had

just dealt the federation a series of membership rejections, including a 61 per cent referendum loss at the University of Toronto, and a successful pull-out referendum at St. Mary's University in Halifax, which was the first campus to join CFS.

At the general meeting where Dowdell was elected, delegates were grappling with regional splits, conflict between the political and services branches, a \$47,000 deficit, and general disagreement over the federation's purpose and direction.

The Student Union of Nova Scotia was launching a barrage of criticisms at CFS for ignoring the needs of Maritime students. On the other side of the country the Federation of Alberta Students had just self-destructed, leaving students there in disarray.

Dowdell knew he was taking on a difficult task. He inherited the job from Brenda Cote, who after a one-year term was so disillusioned

with the federation she publicly admitted she wished she had never taken the job.

Cote, the federation's first chair, was elected on an activist ticket after she led a dramatic one-week occupation at the Universite de Moncton administration building to protest a massive tuition increase.

But Cote's militant views were not shared by other executive members, and she says she spent the year feeling stifled and frustrated.

Dowdell insists this year will be different. "I'm really optimistic," he says. "The bottom line on all this is that CFS has bottomed out. We're on our way up."

Dowdell says this following a quiet summer, before the onslaught of students returning for the fall semester have recovered from registration. But his optimism may not be totally unfounded.

At the May conference, delegates made serious efforts to repair their organization. They made moves to combine the boards directing the federation's political and service activities, and cut down the number of executives on the Central Committee.

They committed themselves to eliminating 80 per cent of their deficit by the end of the year, and so far they have met their financial plan.

Delegates also decided the federation should focus its resources on political issues rather than running membership referenda on prospective member campuses.

"People know the precarious state we're in, and they aren't prepared to over-extend our resources this year," says Dowdell. "We're saying, let's do a good job of servicing the members already in the organization, and then hopefully non-members will look at us and want to join."



Former CFS Chairperson Brenda Cote wishes she never took the job.

But Dowdell is not blind to the problems in his organization. He recognizes this fall will be tough for CFS, with important

referenda coming up at several Ontario institutions, the University of Alberta, and his campus, the University of Regina.

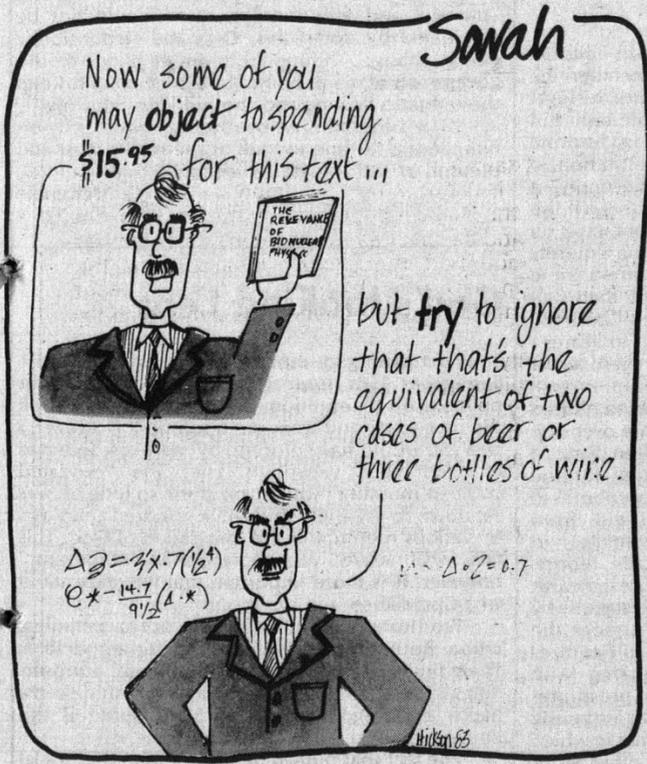
Though Dowdell is hopeful, there is a real chance the federation will suffer another disastrous series of rejections.

"Whenever you try to keep a national organization of any kind together, there's a distinct chance it'll fall apart," he says. "But right

now, students just can't afford that. Too many important things are happening to education."

"If people refuse to work within CFS and solve its problems, then there won't be an effective student voice for a long time. If CFS doesn't make it..." Dowdell shakes his head.

Soon Dowdell will be on the road, travelling first to the Maritimes, and later sweeping across the country. If the next few months don't transform this dedicated optimist into a burned-out cynic, then maybe he'll survive the year. And maybe so will CFS.



Gateway news-writers meeting Tuesday at 3 PM in the lounge at the North End of HUB Mall. New and returning writers welcome